IMPORTANT FROM THE SOUTH.

A TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT IN TENNESSEE

The Embargo on Southern Trade.

THE BLIGHT OF REBELLION

A GLIMPSE OF JOHN BELL.

UNION FEELING IN TENNESSEE.

From Our Special Correspondent.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept. 18, 1861.

To know in advance with almost absolute certainty that one's labor will be lost is discouraging in any undertaking, hence it is only with considerable diffidence and reluctance that I proceed to record for THE TRIBUNE my observations in this latitude, since the often rumored interruption of railroad communication between this city and the loyal portion of Kentucky has got to be an undeniable, disagreeable fact. The chances are ten to one that this epistle will never be able to overleap the Secession fires, now no longer burning covertly, but blazing forth with reckless brightness throughout South-Western Kentucky. If it should, however, reach its destination, and my wits not prove wasted—well, then, you may infer that the Confederate watchfulness does not extend over all the roads leading north from this point, and that this mission will be followed by others.

Nashville is under martial law—a condition of things which I need not assure your readers was anything but comforting to your correspondent, when he first ventured within its grasp. Having observed, however, its operations for some time, I can say that its terrors, whatever they may have been in the first and most virulent stages of the Secession plague, are now only nominal. Much credit as I could probably claim and obtain for daring or cunning, or both, on the strength of the fact that I have managed to sustain myself here unmolested, candor yet compels me to state that even worse human contraband than a Northern newspaper correspondent could be safely smuggled into this outpost, so to speak, of treason, and, with the aid of more than ordinary caution, incur no risk of running his neck into a halter. I may say, in truth, indeed, that I found it much more hazardous to reach this point than to elude suspicion while here. The only real danger I incurred since leaving loyal soil was on the trip from Louisville hitherward, the details of which I subjoin, as an introduction to my Southern letters.

Louisville has been a sort of international entrepot ever since Kentucky, or rather the most unscrupulous of the leaders of her people, assumed the more convenient than honorable position of neutrality—fortunately for the old State now abandoned through the instrumentality, as the truth-loving public prints of this place are assuring their readers, of its "treacherous and corrupt Legislature." Owing to the protection of this neutrality policy, the railroad link that connected the city and State with the South was not, like all other channels of travel and trade between the North and South, severed by Federal authority when the blockade of the rebellious States by land and by water was determined upon. This exemption secured the line of communication under consideration—the Louisville and Nashville Railroad—the benefit of an immense passenger traffic during the entire Summer. From the first days of June, a perfect stream of travelers from the North to the South, and *vice versa*, flowed steadily into Louisville, and hardly a day passed without an uncomfortable rush at the hotels of the city.

During a sojourn of a few days at the Louisville Hotel, I enjoyed abundant opportunities to satisfy myself of the extent and character of this traveling intercourse. Mingling freely and regularly with the arrivals from both sections, I soon found that this vast movement of people in opposite directions was not by any means purely emigration, that it was not only composed of such as either from choice or from necessity, sought refuge for the duration of the civil war either north or south of Mason and Dixon's line, but also to a great extent of parties that were influenced by altogether different motives. When I crossed the Ohio I entertained the gratifying belief that such a thing as a blockade of the avenues of Southern trade on Kentucky soil really existed. But what I saw and heard at the afore-mentioned hotel convinced me, in less than forty-eight hours, that I had labored under a grevious delusion. At least one half of the crowd that surrounded me consisted not only of victims of the great rebellion, but Southern traders and business men generally, that were visiting the commercial emporium of Kentucky from perfect and well-grounded confidence in the mere nominality of the Federal embargo, and for the express, and in many cases openly avowed, purpose of violating it. There were representatives of Memphis, Nashville, Vicksburg, Natchez, and even New-Orleans, Mobile, Savannah and Charleston, relating to each other, in the hotel parlor, at all hours of the day, regardless of strange ears, how many thousands and tens of thousands of dollars worth of goods they had been buying. And not only their purchases, but their plans as to how they were to reach their destination, formed the subjects of loud conversations. Some narrated with jests and jeers the pretexts under which they had obtained or expected to obtain, Custom-House permits. Others indicated their intention of shipping their contraband by water to some interior landing on the Tennessee, Cumberland, or Green River, and then reship them by axle and rail further South. Others again talked of merely transporting them a few miles overland to the first or second station south of the city on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad and then transferring them to the cars; in short, the gist and substance of their exchange of thoughts and purposes imbued me with the liveliest conviction that the land no less than the sea blockade was anything but perfect. This impression was fully confirmed afterward by the incidents of my journey Southward.

Having completed my preparations for my proposed pilgrimage to the uncongenial regions of the South, I embarked on the morning of (but dates might prove treacherous)—from the hotel for the depot of the L. and N. Railroad. Two huge omnibuses, jammed full of male, female, and juvenile passengers, together with a number of hacks and a large baggage-wagon loaded with a towering pile of trunks, carried the contribution of our hotel to the through train for Nashville. Arrived at the depot, the passengers were required, after purchasing tickets, to make the acquaintance of a Custom-House inspector, who was planted on the platform in front of the baggage-car, and informed us that the owners of all baggage would have either to produce the customary permit from the Surveyor of the Port or submit to an examination of their effects. A highly interesting scene now occurred. A dozen baggage-smashers plunged amid the broad expanse of every variety of trunks, valises, bags, boxes, and bundles before us. Each passenger, of course, wanted to be done first, and the consequent struggle for precedence caused commotion and confusion beyond description. Fortunately, the majority of the traders were provided with the Surveyor's permits—among them a number of the mercantile gentlemen from various Southern cities, whose smuggling intentions I alluded to further above. Eight unlucky ones, including four ladies, were, however, without the necessary documents, and ordered to disclose the contents of their baggage to the eyes of the Inspector and his assistants. The three gentlemen commenced arguing, protesting their loyalty and Kentucky domicile. The ladies pleaded, begged as only ladies can beg, and when this seemed to be of no avail, two actually cried. But the official was inexorable, and the keys had to be produced, the locks opened, and the strings untied. The eager circle of curious idlers that watched the proceedings now feasted their eyes upon a ruthless exhibition of the usual variety of articles of male and female wear. I was counting from a car window the number of dresses gradually appearing from the depths of one of those fearfully spacious structures that now-a-days accompany fashionable ladies on their travels, when a piercing shriek struck my ear. Turning in the direction of the sound of distress, I perceived a female figure reclining in a fainting attitude in the arms of a bystander. The clue to the tragic *dénouement* I obtained at once from several packages of military buttons and some yards of gold lace which the Inspector held up with a sardonic smile to the gaze of those around him. The tender smuggler was then removed, with her property, to the waiting-room, previous to being taken before the Surveyor. Her fate was shared by another lady and one of the three gentlemen, the former's trunk having been relieved of a small stock of medicine and half-a-dozen flannel shirts, and the latter's of a complete officer's uniform.

After a delay of nearly an hour, the "all aboard" of the conductor at last gave the signal for starting, and in a few seconds we were rolling out of the depot, and toward our destination. Having been informed that Confederate spies were on all the southward-bound trains, I made it my first business to pass through the several cars, and take a careful survey of my company. A motley congregation they formed, well paying more than passing attention. There was first a car full of more or less numerous families—whites, liberally interspersed with colored servants—apparently late residents of the North, but now seeking their Southern homes. There were next at least two dozen individuals, whose physiognomies, and peculiar treatment of the King's English, gave unmistakable evidence of their Israelitish origin. Again, there were a number of youthful passengers, dressed in jean, with long, flowing, and expansive shirt-collars, and denoting themselves, by their swaggerish, overbearing demeanor and attitudes, as Southerners, if not by birth, at least by sympathy. I ascertained afterward that they were members of the Kentucky State Guard—the Secession corps organized under the auspices of the traitorous Magoffin, reputedly for the preservation of the neutrality of the State, but in reality for its precipitation into disloyalty. There were, further, the familiar faces of the Southern merchants, sharing seats with parties evidently hailing likewise from Southern climes, and returning from similar missions. In addition to these, there was the usual sprinkling of way-travelers, residents of the Kentucky towns along the line of the road. As I made the tour of the cars, the apprehension of meeting some one that knew me and my vocation, stole over me; but, of the many countenances that I scanned, but one revived reminiscences. It was that of a young Virginian whom I met years ago in Kansas, where he figured among the loudest and most obnoxious of Pro-Slavery ruffians. In view of his antecedents, I felt anything but a desire to renew acquaintance. Luckily, the recognition was not mutual.

During the first hour of the journey there was a remarkable want of animation among the occupants of the train. With the exception of the country people from along the road, who discussed matters and things in general, and the situation of political affairs in particular, with a good deal of liveliness, the passengers preserved either silence or conversed in under tones. It was plain that they were not at their ease, but labored under some restraint. They seemed to feel a mutual suspicion, and exercise a distrusting vigilance over each other, all of which was not very strange in the face of the hostile political creeds of the day, that were, beyond all doubt, severally represented in uncertain strength on the train, and the general belief that there were secret agents of both the Federal and the Confederate Government abroad. The reserve and guardedness that first characterized the conduct of the majority of passengers did not, however, last long, but gradually gave way as the train sped southward. When we reached Elizabethtown, some 40 miles from Louisville, it had nearly disappeared, and it became certain that the greater number of my fellow-travelers were more or less ardent sympathizers with the cause of the Rebels. Elizabethtown is notorious all over Kentucky as a hot-bed of treason, and during the first stoppage of the train I saw enough to satisfy me that the town had well earned its fame. On the platform a large throng of males and females had gathered. About a dozen of the former were in the uniform of the State guards, provided with muskets, and visibly engaged in taking lead of those around them. Two flags intended for the "bars and stars" were floating from above the crowd. The train boy sang out lustily, "Ere is your *Courier*, the only Secesh paper in Louisville," and found as many customers as he could conveniently supply. Upon the sound of the whistle, three spirited cheers broke forth from the assemblage for Jeff. Davis, Beauregard and Buckner (the disloyal commander of the State Guard), rather to my surprise, and were heartily responded to inside the cars, first by my former acquaintance from Virginia, and then by the already-described cavaliers in jean. Then evidence of the rebellious spirit of the locality was furnished by the fact, that no less than thirty-eight trunks, as I learned from the baggage-master, were here taken on the train, while no more than fifteen passengers came aboard. I saw myself several of the Nashville and Memphis merchants busy themselves about some of the trunks, and doubted no longer the often-heard statement that Elizabethtown was the worst smuggler's nest on the whole road.

From Elizabethtown, matters on the train bore an altogether changed aspect. The infusion of armed Secession elements seemed to invigorate and embolden the sympathizers with rebellion that had started from Louisville, who theretofore deemed silence the better policy. My Kansas friend became excessively boisterous and shockingly prolific with oaths, and execrations of "the d—d Yankees." The Cavaliers in broad shirt-collars grew equally loud and fiercely denunciatory, and brave in words. The sons of Israel also jabbered away with increased vigor and frankness, cursing the blockade, chuckling over successful smuggling dodges, and calculating the profit they expected to realize from them, thereby confirming what I had been told in the Custom-House at Louisville, viz.: that Jews are among the most persistent and cunning contrabandists.

The nearer we approached the southern part of the State, the more frequent became the symptoms of disaffection along the road. It seemed as though the political affinities of the border counties which our line of travel traversed were strongly Northern or Southern according to their relative contiguity to loyal or disloyal regions, while the intervening portion of the State was a sort of middle ground, occupied by loyalists and rebel sympathizers in about equal strength, the number of either decreasing in opposite directions. After crossing Holin's Creek, emblems of Union and Disunion appeared to be equally divided among the crowds that greeted the train at each station. South of Hartfordsville, where the road crosses Green River on a magnificent bridge, the latter gradually gained the ascendency in numbers. Cheers for the rebel leaders grew almost exclusive, and the copies of *The Louisville Journal* sold by the newsboy were few and far between, while the demand for its Secession rival—*The Courier*—steadily increased. At Horse-Cave station—about six miles from the Mammoth Cave—we met a crowded passenger train that had left Nashville early in the morning. It had Nashville papers, for which there was quite a rush. They sold for double what the Louisville papers realized—not, however, on account of intrinsic merit, as a glance at *The Union and American*, the vilest of the Tennessee organs of treason, satisfied me. Its latest news from the "seat of war," via Richmond, included the Lewinsville reconnoissance, which was trumpeted by telegraph as a glorious Southern victory, with a Federal loss of three hundred killed and wounded, and the defeat of Rosecrans by Floyd, and the slaughter by the latter's forces of "at least" eight hundred "Yankee invaders."

At Bowling Green, 114 miles from Louisville, a very noisy Secession mob awaited our arrival. The town is said to be inhabited by some of the wildest Secessionists in the State. The Union element, however, is also represented to be respectable in numbers and character. Congressman Grider resides here. From this point two railroads extend in a Southern direction—one the direct line to Nashville, via Franklin and Gallatin, the other, via Russelville, Hadonsville and Springfield. Some outrages, such as the seizure of rolling stock, were committed on the former in the course of the Summer by Tennessee Rebels from Camp Trousdale, a few miles below a State line, in consequence of which the passenger traffic was transferred to the more circuitous route, over which all the travel from and to the North has since been passing.

From Bowling Green to Hadonsville, at which a change of cars took place, evidence of our near approach to the Confederate dominions accumulated rapidly. The State Guards on the train were receiving accessions to their number at nearly every station, the rebels being all bound, as they loudly announced, for Camp Boone, the notorious rendezvous of Kentucky disloyalists, just below the State line, about a mile from the road. At Russelville a large Rebel flag was displayed near the depot, and some sixty recruits for the camp boarded the train. Prepared as I was for uncongenial company, I am free to say that I began to feel rather uneasy amid the boisterous rebels, many of whom were laboring under the effects of an over-indulgence in liquor. My situation became particularly unpleasant, when a tall, rowdyish fellow, with a musket in his hands, swimming eyes and whiskyish odor, took a seat at my side and commenced entertaining me with incoherent and insolent Secession talk. Disagreeable as it was, I had to bear up under his drunken insolence until we reached Hadonsville.

Here, I had been informed, the gauntlet of Confederate surveillance would begin. And, sure enough, I had hardly emerged from the train upon the platform, when my eyes fell upon a tall, burly, red-haired individual, in uniform, armed with a sword and revolver, no less a personage, as I subsequently ascertained, than the notorious Capt. Hawkins, who has discharged the duties of a Confederate custom and police-officer, on the trains from Nashville to the State line, all Summer. Expecting an examination of my baggage, I repaired to the baggage car, but found that a simple declaration that my trunk contained nothing but wearing apparel was sufficient. I learned afterward that the custom-laws of the Southern Confederacy are almost dead, as far as the importation of goods subject to duty over this line was concerned, the necessities of the South rendering an encouragement rather than an obstruction of the smuggling trade from the North desirable. After a delay of some twenty minutes we were moving toward Clarksville, and in a few minutes entered upon "foreign soil"—an event which was announced to me by a piercing yell from my Virginia acquaintance, followed by loud declarations of satisfaction at finding himself at last in the "only country fit to live in."

The conductor had hardly called on me for my ticket, when the door of the car opened again, and in the dim lamp-light—it was now nearly 8 o'clock—the figure of Capt. Hawkins appeared, followed by another, also in uniform. A peculiar sensation overcame me when I saw him survey closely the countenances of the occupants of the first seat, and stooping down, address them several questions. I knew from previous information that he was in the habit of closely investigating the character of all passengers for the South; that I would now have to submit the story as to the object of my journey I had elaborated beforehand to his experienced criticism, and hence a little squeamishness was but natural on my part. Well, in a few minutes my turn came, and mustering all my self-control, I answered his interrogatories with perfect coolness and nonchalance, and even managed to look him straight in the eye. My tale, the details of which prudence, of course, forbids giving, was told, and he passed on to the traveler in my rear. He was—at least I thought so—a much less suspicious-looking individual than myself; but, whether from fright or consciousness of guilt, his answers to the Captain's catechism were not satisfactory to the latter. He claimed to be a resident of Huntsville, Ala., and bound thither. The account of his doings in the "enemy's country," as the Captain was pleased to style the Northern States, was, however, somewhat incoherent, and hence the Confederate official informed him, in spite of his protestations of Southern sentiment, that he would have to put him under the charge of his assistant, to be dealt with at Nashville as the commanding General would see proper. Accordingly, the assistant, who proved to be a lieutenant in a Nashville company, took a seat at his side; and I had the pleasure of his immediate vicinity until we reached our destination.

Capt. Hawkins continued his examinations, but found no occasion for further arrests. The instrument of Confederate authority behind me, in his conversation with the suspicious traveler, stated, however, very consolingly, that he—the Captain—had already captured a good many Northern spies. But the most profitable part of the Captain's occupation, as I have been told since my arrival in Nashville, is the examination of travelers on the trains for the North, that he accompanies every morning from Nashville to the State line, his main object being to prevent information that might give aid and comfort to the enemy, from going North, and the export of specie. All persons not known to him, or vouched for by others, are rigorously searched, and hauls made every day. His seizures of specie are said to have averaged $50,000 a week, for which neither equivalent nor receipt is given—the money being simply pocketed for the alleged benefit of the Rebel Government. If Capt. Hawkins is not a rich man soon, it will certainly not be for want of opportunities.

Shortly after 10 o'clock we crossed the Cumberland, and in a few minutes I issued from the cars at the depot, and after considerable trouble succeeded in finding the house of a Unionist, to whom I had letters from prominent loyal men in Louisville, and at whose house I found a hospitable reception and a safe retreat.

NASHVILLE, Sept. 19, 1861.

During the first days of my stay in the capital of Tennessee, I could not help experiencing feelings of uneasiness and apprehension, whenever I ventured to show myself upon the public streets. As I strolled along the sidewalks, passing hundreds of people, the thought of the possibility of accidentally stumbling against some one that knew me but seldom left me, and made me scrutinize the faces of all passers by with anxious curiosity. But success emboldens. After the lapse of a few days my sense of danger became blunted, and I mingled with people on the street, visited places of public resort, and gradually extended my range of observations of men and matters with as little concern as I formerly frequented my customary haunts in the Empire City.

The City of Nashville is situated upon elevated limestone bluffs on the left bank of the Cumberland River. Viewed from its higher portions, its wide and regular streets, its compact and commanding expanse of business edifices, surrounded with a circle of splendid private residences, amid beautiful undergroves and finely arranged gardens, together with its truly magnificent public buildings—among which the stately Capitol is the most prominent—presents an ensemble of truly striking appearance. Nashville impresses one altogether more like a Northern, or rather North-Western, than a Southern city. Its dimensions are large, and indicative of the confidence of the inhabitants, based upon past success, in future greatness and prosperity. Traces of recent improvement, enterprise and thrift, are perceptible in every direction. In ten years the city had, indeed, tripled its population—from 10,000 to 30,000—and more than quadrupled the value of taxable property. But even a transient observer of the present status of Nashville cannot fail to be impressed with the conviction, that, whatever apparent indications of business activity there may be in the capital of the most thrifty of Slave States, they reflect the past rather than the present. The blight of Secession has arrested the progress of Nashville. A walk over the business portions of the city, a survey of the customless appearance of the open and a count of the closed stores on the public squares, in Market, Cherry, College, Union, and Broad streets, and of the idle workshops and factories on Water and other streets, reveals plainly the severity of the blow inflicted upon the trade and industry of the city by the wanton severance of the ties that cemented Tennessee, politically and commercially, with the North. In spite of the immense natural advantages of the city—its location in the heart of one of the finest agricultural regions in the country—its direct connections by rail and water with all parts of the North and South, none of which was disturbed or obstructed to any very injurious extent until just now—its business has been paralyzed ever since its doom was sealed by the passage of the ordnance linking the political fortunes of Tennessee to those of the Cotton States.

It is true, Nashville has been as yet visited less severely than any other commercial point in the South, and this is owing to the fact that its rail facilities to the Ohio River enabled its wholesale and retail merchants to procure, if not all, at least a portion of their customary supplies of goods, the blockade to the contrary notwithstanding. Nashville doubtlessly imported more "foreign" goods in the course of the past Summer than any other Southern city, and its business men realized splendid profits on all the goods they could command. But the day before yesterday terminated the partial exemption from the fatal effect of the general embargo upon Southern trade the city had hitherto enjoyed, and Nashville will henceforth keep pace with Memphis, Vicksburgh, Natchez, New-Orleans, &c., on the road to inevitable ruin. Nothing can more clearly illustrate the infatuation and recklessness of Southern rebels than the interruption of travel and freighting over the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, with the connivance, and at the instance of the Secession leaders in this place. They knew that from the very moment this, their last means of communication with the North, was cut off, most of the articles of daily consumption would immediately rise in price, and consequently the already prevailing distress among the poor be greatly increased, and yet they countenanced and even encouraged the destruction of the road by their sympathizers under Gen. Buckner.

It was quite interesting to observe the effect of the news of the rising of the Secessionists in Kentucky—their open defiance of Federal and State authority—forcibly taking possession of the lower end of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad—the burning of bridges, etc. Those in authority hereabout—Gov. Harris, Brig.-Gen. Foster, and their immediate confidants—were, of course, fully apprized in advance of the intentions of Gen. Buckner, and even the general public had been somewhat prepared for a *coup d' état* by strong intimations thrown out by the press. Thus the news did not create much surprise, but the excitement caused by the consummation of what had been desired by a good many, and expected by nearly all, was, nevertheless, intense. The morning papers day before yesterday contained the last direct telegraphic intelligence from the North—the swan-song of W. M. Barr, the agent of the New-Orleans Associated Press, who is at last, as to-day's papers announce, about meeting his richly-deserved fate of an involuntary sojourn at Fort Lafayette, so often telegraphically denounced by him as "Lincoln's Bastille." On the evening of the same day—the 17th instant—an extra appeared with an account of the "sudden and mighty rise of the friends of the South in Southern and Central Kentucky"—"the advance of the Kentucky regiments from Camp Boone, and the Tennessee troops from Camp Trousdale upon Kentucky soil"—"the march of Gen. Buckner upon Louisville," &c. The sensation budget wound up with, "We learn that a few nights since a park of field artillery was forwarded to Camp Boone from this city, in anticipation of decisive events in Kentucky."

Groups of excited individuals soon collected in front of the newspaper offices in Cherry and Deadwick streets, at the corners of the public square, and in front of the City Hotel, eagerly discussed the stirring news, and indulged from time to time in cheers for Old Kentuck, Gen. Buckner, Gov. Magoffin, and John C. Breckinridge. The crowd seemed to be fully impressed with the idea that the Confederate flag would fly over Louisville in the next forty-eight hours. One violent personage loudly glorified in the prospect of controlling the Ohio River, and bringing the "thieving City of Cincinnati," as he termed it, to terms at the mouth of the cannon. If I was not altogether misinformed as to the present temper of the loyal majority of the people of Kentucky, Nashville is running much greater risk of such a visitation than Porkopolis.

Yesterday morning, in their editorial comments upon the occurrences of the previous day, *The Union and American* and *Patriot* showed an ill-disguised satisfaction at the compulsory precipitation of Kentucky into war, and the removal of the danger of war from the border of Tennessee. This selfish, cowardly feeling of relief from the horrors of war, at the expense of too confiding neighbors, seemed to be generally prevalent. Parties remarked within my hearing that Kentucky was now paying the just penalty for not having joined her Southern sisters when Tennessee did, and thereby at once forcing the North into an abandonment of the "war of subjugation." Would that these atrocious sentiments could be heard by every loyal Kentuckian. They would then see that their professed brethren of the South will not shrink from giving the lie to the boasted Southern dogma of the supremacy of State sovereignty by attempting to plunge Kentucky into revolution against her most clearly and emphatically expressed will, devastating her fields, stealing and destroying her property, and drenching her soil with the blood of her sons.

Last evening, the jubilation of the Nashville rebels was considerably dampened by the news that Gen. Buckner's triumphant march on Louisville was impeded by the destruction of an important bridge between Louisville and Elizabethtown. Rumors were also prevalent that his army had fallen back on Bowling Green, and that Gen. Anderson was advancing along the railroad with 20,000 Federal troops. They were repeated in this morning's papers, and made the occasion of strong hints to the military rulers of the propriety of preparing the militia for active service. Blinded as the rebels are in this latitude by over-weening confidence in the superior valor of the defenders of Southern soil, they have got sense enough left to see the utterly defenseless position of Nashville, and recognize the certainty that a defeat of the Confederates near the State line would inevitably place their city at the mercy of the "Yankee invaders."

There were about 4,000 Kentuckians at Camp Boone, and an equal number of Tennesseeans at Camp Trousdale, so that Buckner, with the accessions to his army from Central and Southern Kentucky, has probably no less than 12,000 men under him. It is claimed here that the troops at Camps Boone and Trousdale were well uniformed, armed, and drilled. But I happen to know better, and that from authentic sources. In both camps only about three-fourths were armed, mostly with indifferent muskets, and not one-half well supplied with clothing. Of a Commissary and Quartermaster's Department, hardly a shadow existed before they took the field. They have about twenty field pieces, but scarcely any experienced artillerists. It was reported on the street this evening that dispatches had been received from Richmond promising a succor of ten regiments from the army of the Potomac—with what truthfulness a few days will show.

My host assured me to-day that since the stoppage of the Louisville Railroad prices of every description of merchandise had risen from ten to twenty-five per cent. As most articles were previously held at exorbitant rates—from one to four hundred per cent higher than in the North—it may be readily imagined that the greatest privations and sufferings will visit the poorer classes during the impending cold season.

NASHVILLE, TENN., Sept. 20, 1861.

We are absolutely cut off from the North. Contending armies have blocked up the last channel of communication so effectually that it now seems as though a Chinese wall intervened between the two sections of the country. The mail and express failed long ago, and at last the railroad and telegraph have also given out. For four life-long days already not a breath of trustworthy intelligence from the loyal North has been wafted to this latitude. I begin to realize my isolation. There is to me something extremely oppressive in the thought of being separated by almost insurmountable obstructions from the cause and the people in which all my sympathies center, and compelled to breathe—for months perhaps—the same air with those engaged in the foulest political crime that ever excited one's spirit of hatred and vengeance. And it is not the want of communion—the sort of compulsory intellectual intercourse with the wicked, ignorant, fanatical, brutish followers of the Secession heresy I am now holding is a greater source of mental tribulation. Necessity forces me to put up with the regular digestion of the contents of the daily organs of treason and rebellion in this city. It is a diet, I can assure your readers, that would soon wear out a better constituted stomach than my own. Such doses of ignorance, mendacity, sophistry, presumption, and blackguardism, as I am nolens volens administering to myself twice a day, from the columns of the morning and evening papers of this place! Verily, the race that not only tolerates but encourages and enjoys such intellectual bastardy as is daily committed in *The Daily Union and American*, *Patriot*, *Gazette*, and *Banner*, deserves no better than to be wiped out from among the living! If the files of these journalistic abortions should outlive the rebellion, posterity will want no better evidence of the justice of the terrible retribution that will sooner or later overtake all those engaged in the Southern Pro-Slavery crusade.

This sweeping judgment applies with equal justice not only to the Nashville, but to the Southern Press generally. Nashville having been the center through which all the immense travel between the North and the South has passed during the last six months, the continued presence in the city of travelers from all parts of the South created a great demand and procured a liberal supply of all the leading Southern papers, so that I was not wanting means of judging correctly. Southern journalism reflects truly and fully the utter corruption of the Southern mind by the political pestilence that has been ravaging upon slave soil since November last. Never was human intelligence prostituted to baser purposes. Never was the most responsible of professions degraded to greater depth. Never was the guilt of guiding a deceived people to ruin more madly assumed, and never more recklessly increased by the most unscrupulous adaptation of the means to the end!

Fortunately the Southern press is already itself tasting the bitter fruit of the evil seed it has sown. One of the most rabid of editorial Secession agitators in Richmond confessed in his paper the other day the reluctant but sincere conviction that there was not a single paying paper published in the Southern Confederacy. Looking over the twenty odd papers that adorn the reading-room of the City Hotel in this place, I find unmistakable evidence that the troubles of his soul were but too well-founded. Reduction of size, destitution of paying advertisements, poor paper of various colors, miserable typography, and doleful notices of the demise of cotemporaries characterized the largest number; and all this in spite of the fact that they had all raised their prices nearly thirty per cent months ago. The want of type and machinery for the repair of presses, together with the steady decrease of the supply of paper, will make fearful havoc among those that managed to survive thus far. There is but one type foundery in the South (located in Richmond), and its capacity is very limited. As to paper, a Memphis daily stated but a few days since that it feared that all the Southern dailies would have to appear before long in half sheets. An attaché to one of the papers here informed me yesterday that their supply would give out in a few days, and that the proprietor was at a total loss whence to procure another.

The excitement on the streets continues unabated. The wildest rumors have been in circulation all day as to the condition of war matters in Kentucky and Virginia. The report of the advance of Gen. Anderson, at the head of 20,000 men, upon Bowling Green, is both denied and confirmed. Gen. Zollicoffer is said to have attacked and dispersed the Kentucky and Tennessee troops in the Federal service at Camp Dick Robinson. The papers also announce, with extravagant head lines, the repulse, with terrific slaughter, of Gen. Rosecrans's army by the Rebel forces under Floyd—all of which is eagerly swallowed and religiously believed by the Nashville public. Having no means of correctly testing the relative truthfulness of these stories, I can only judge them by the general unreliability of the Southern papers, and hope the best. The uncertainty, however, harrasses me greatly.

I learned this morning that Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, the newly-appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate armies in the Mississippi valley, passed through here on the night before last. He made but a short stay, being on his way from Richmond to the headquarters of Gen. Polk, whom he was to relieve from the supreme command of the army about Columbus. The newspapers of Tennessee were urging the appointment of Gen. Johnston to the command in question long before his arrival at Richmond, and, since their recommendation has been acted upon, indulge in the most measureless landations of the military capacities of the General, and the most ridiculous predictions of a rapid series of glorious victories under his auspices. I understand, also, that a deputation proceeded hence to Richmond a short time ago to urge likewise the detail of Gen. Johnston to the Department of the West. The secret of all this is that the Secession leaders had lost altogether what little confidence they ever had in the military talents and acquirements of Bishop-General Polk and Major-General Pillow, and were greatly apprehensive of disastrous results, should these two worthies continue to have the management of matters. The clerical General is said to be mixing too much theology with his strategy—to look more to the safety of the souls than to the comfort of the bodies of his soldiers, which, he being no Cromwell, and his men no Ironsides, has given rise to frequent complaints. As to the redoubtable, he is nowhere more heartily recognized in his true character of an inflated humbug than here in Middle Tennessee, his home. His presumption, ignorance, and unsparing arbitrariness, have been a constant source of irritation to the officers and men under him, and there would be general rejoicing should he feel contented with his present laurels, and retire once more to the classic grounds of Murphy County. Jeff. Davis is said to have been disgusted with him ever since the revelation of his brilliant scheme of stretching a chain across the Mississippi for the obstruction of steamboat navigation.

The many reports to the contrary notwithstanding, I am positive that no troops have as yet passed through this city from Virginia, or any other part of the Confederacy, for the reënforcement of Gen. Buckner. The papers, it is true, studiously avoid all allusion to the movements of troops. But Nashville is not so large a place that large bodies of men could march through unobserved by the majority of citizens. The truth is, the reports of the immense preparations in the Northern Navy-Yards and military depots for a number of strong naval expeditions against the Gulf coast spread through the South just before the telegraphic communication with the North was cut off, and caused such consternation and such strong appeals to the Confederate authorities for the better protection of the exposed points, that, if any troops can be spared from the army of the Potomac, they will most likely be sent South, and not to Kentucky. The appointment of so experienced a General as Johnston—that he was appointed with a previous knowledge of and a special view to expected events in Kentucky—is probably all the Rebel Government will feel able to do in this direction.

Since the stoppage of through trains to Louisville and the uncertainty as to the practicability of at all getting North, there has been quite an accumulation of travelers in this city. The hotels are full of single persons and families from various Southern States, that intend to make their way North previous to the 23d, the day on which the act exiling all citizens of the United States that refused to take the oath of allegiance to the rebel authorities goes into effect. These people are in a very precarious predicament, having only limited means, and being unwilling to return, and unable to proceed. If the act in question is strictly enforced, they will all be arrested and confined the day after to-morrow until the war is over.

The events in Kentucky have stimulated the Home Guards of this city to greater exertions in drilling. I am told that there are over 1,500 men enrolled for the "defense of the city." Brig.-Gen. Postel, the commandant of this District, better known as "Cross-Eyed Bob," is a weak brother, both physically and intellectually speaking, and evidently not a dangerous customer to deal with.

NASHVILLE, Sept. 21, 1861.

I was sauntering along South Market street the other day, when I caught sight of an individual walking on the opposite pavement, whose face and figure appeared familiar to me. I crossed over, and, coming near the person, recognized in him an old Washington acquaintance—John Bell. Not desiring a mutual recognition, I turned my head sideward and passed on. I had not known before this accidental meeting that this fallen political star was eking out an obscure existence in Nashville, and lost no time in gathering whatever information I could command of the doings of this shadow of the past since his public suicide in March last.

I had undertaken no easy task. Brilliant as the reminiscences connected with his name—are idolized as he was but a short time ago by a powerful party in his own State, and throughout the South and North—having swept as he did but last Fall Tennessee by an overwhelming majority, all I could learn of his present political status tended to the conviction that he was dead, dead beyond all hope of resurrection. Once a great leader—famed all over the land—honored far beyond the usual measure of man, now—without friends, without influence—an unpitied ruin—a living monument of weakness, error, folly, and self-degradation. There really seemed none left to do him reverence. His lot is that of complete political isolation. He stands unreconciled to the present, and parted with the past. The leaders in the false cause that brought about his fall had no honor, no sympathy for him, while those that once clung to his political fortunes have grown indifferent, and lost their trust in him. And thus he lives an unenviable, lonesome, hopeless existence, embittered, beyond all doubt, by the consciousness of having, by one false step, inflicted a stain upon his record that obscures all glory of his past, and can never be fully wiped out.

To appreciate all this, it must be known that John Bell, his public renunciation of loyalty to the Union to the contrary notwithstanding, has really neither heart nor hand in the great Southern rebellion. He goes with his section, not because he thinks it is right, but because it is his section. He pronounces himself a Rebel—however, not one of choice. He believes, or at least expresses the opinion, that the "war of subjugation" undertaken by the North is wrong, but, on the other hand, loses no opportunity in declaring the Southern revolution unjustified. Whenever he visits places of public resort, he takes occasion to denounce the Jefferson Davis dynasty in unmeasured terms. His past public services secure him immunity from the consequences this offense would entail upon any other, but render him at the same time unpopular among the thorough-going Rebels. The late confiscation of some of his steamboat property has greatly irritated him, not sufficiently, however, to make him more forbearing with the administration of affairs at Richmond.

At the time John Bell made public his address to the cause of the South, the belief generally prevailed in the North, that his old love of whisky had got the better of his judgment and made him forget his former and better self. But I have the testimony of one of his oldest political adherents, who worked harder for his election to the Presidency than any other man living, that his defection was caused by a failure of moral courage, rather than enervation by over-indulgence in liquor. In past years there was no man in the nation that stood up more boldly and fearlessly for what he deemed true and just than John Bell. But the waves of Secession rolled too strongly and sweepingly over the portion of the State he lived in, and instead of battling against them his heart gave way, and he allowed himself to be carried along by the current. Ambition—hope of realizing in sectional what he failed to reach in national spheres—perhaps had also something to do with his apparent abandonment of long-cherished convictions. His personal enmity to Andrew John-